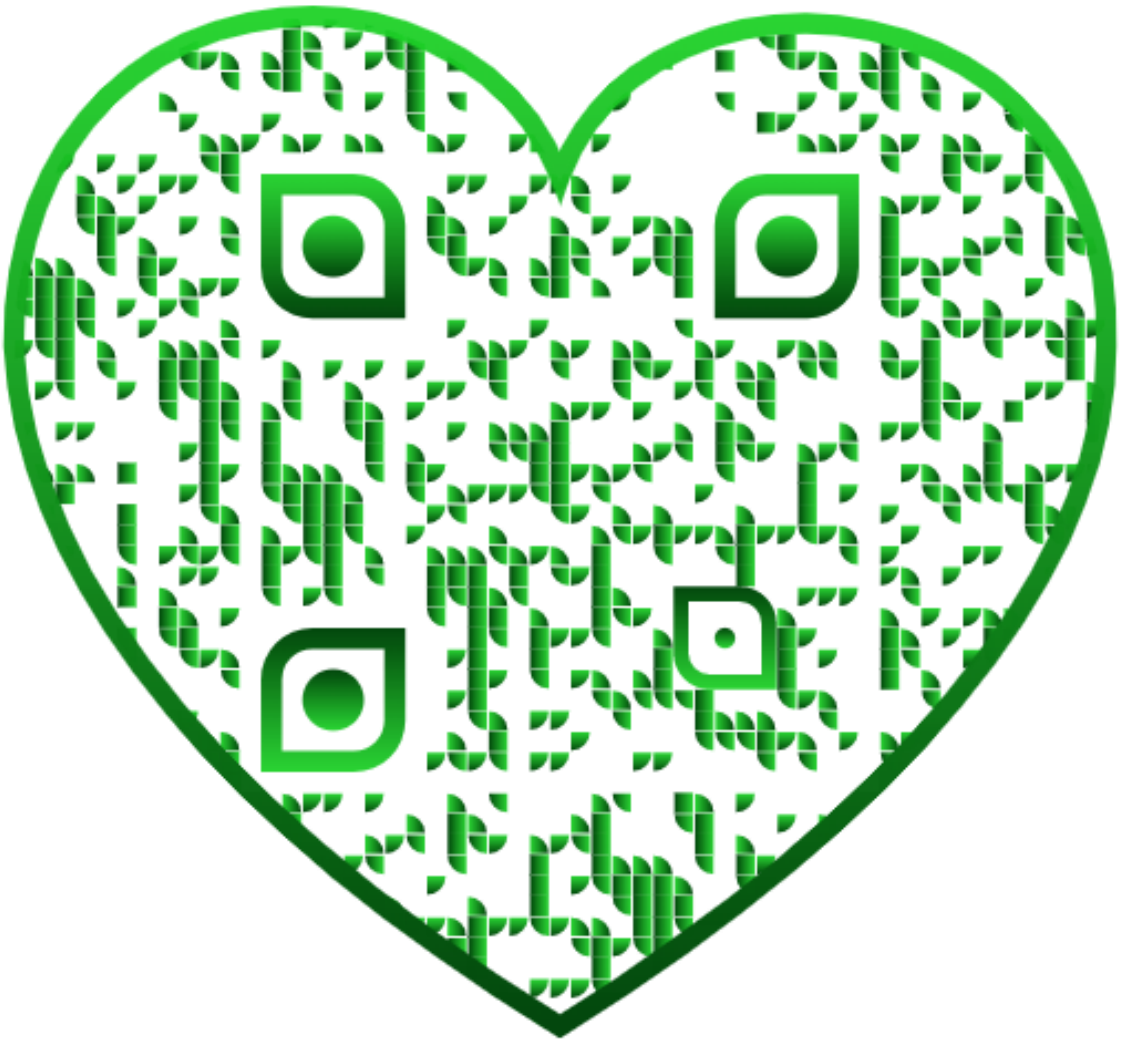
Are Sweet Potato Leaves Edible? Yes, definitely!

It's time to meet the newest bunch of leaves poised for the superfood spotlight: sweet potato leaves… edible and delicious, with a softer texture and less bitter taste than kale or chard.

A new analysis published in the journal *HortScience* found the leaves have 3 times more vitamin B6, 5 times more vitamin C, and almost 10 times more riboflavin than actual sweet potatoes. Also an excellent source of antioxidants, high levels of vitamin A, thiamin, folic acid and niacin with impressive amounts of fiber, calcium, magnesium, manganese, zinc, copper, potassium and iron. Nutritionally similar to spinach, but sweet potato leaves have less oxalic acid, which gives some greens like spinach and chard a sharper taste.

As for eating the leaves, they're best used like spinach, The simplest way is to sauté them with garlic and olive oil just until they're wilted … add a couple drops of fish sauce, too. (Remove 2-3 strings from the stem, like with celery, by starting at the bottom and pull up.) Also good greens for chookies, pet rabbits, guinea pigs ….



Sweet potato leaves Quick Facts

Name:	Sweet potato leaves
Scientific Name:	Ipomoea batatas
Origin	Tropical regions in America
Colors	Green (Leaves)
Shapes	Alternate, ovate to orbicular, Length: 4-15 cm; Width: 3-11 cm (Leaves)
Taste	Bitter
Calories	15 Kcal./cup
Major nutrients	Vitamin K (88.17%) Vitamin A (9.43%) Vitamin B2 (9.31%) Magnesium (5.71%) Vitamin B6 (5.08%)

Health Benefits of Sweet Potato leaves

1. **Heart ailments**

Vitamin K helps to prevent the arteries calcification which is one of the main causes for heart attacks. It carries away from arteries and does not allow forming into harmful and hard deposits of plaque. Vitamin K is a vital nutrients in order to reduce inflammation and prevent the cells which lines the blood vessels such as arteries and veins. An adequate intake of Vitamin K helps to maintain the healthy blood pressure and reduces the risk of having cardiac arrest.

2. **Density of bones**

Vitamin K helps to maintain the calcium on bones and reduces the chances of osteoporosis. The studies shows that high intake of Vitamin K can eradicate bone loss in osteoporosis patients. Vitamin K is essential for using calcium to form bones. Vitamin K enhances the health of bones and lowers the chances of bone fractures in the postmenopausal women.

The high intake of Vitamin K2 helps to reduce the chances of hip fracture by about 65%. The evidence shows that Vitamin D and Vitamin K works together to enhance the density of bones. Vitamin K has the positive effects on calcium balance. The consumption of foods rich in Vitamin K by the injured patients helps to prevent the sprained ankles and recovers the broken bones.

3. **Pain during menstruation**

Vitamin K regulates the hormone function lowers the pain of PMS cramps and menstrual pains. Vitamin K clots the blood and prevents the excessive bleeding during menstruation and relieves pain of PMS symptoms. Over bleeding can cause more pains and cramps during menstruation. The deficiency of Vitamin K can worsen these symptoms.

4. **Treats cancer**

Vitamin K helps to reduce the chances of colon, prostate, nasal, oral and stomach cancer. The study shows that high intake of Vitamin K by the liver cancer patients helps to enhance the functions of liver. The intake of Vitamin K helps to reduce the chances of cancer and cardiovascular conditions.

5. **Clots blood**

Vitamin K assists in blood clotting which requires twelve proteins to function. Vitamin K promotes the clotting of blood which helps to recover the cuts and bruises quickly. When the blood clotting does not takes place properly then one could experience haemorrhagic disease of new born. This is caused due to the deficiency of Vitamin K. The study shows that the newborns should be given the injection of Vitamin K at birth to prevent from HDN.

6. **Brain health**

The study shows that Vitamin K has the role in the metabolism of sphingolipid in which the molecules occur naturally which is present in the cell membranes of the brain. Sphingolipids have a vital role in the cellular actions and assist in forming and supporting the structural role in the brain. An evidence shows that Vitamin K possess an anti-inflammatory properties which prevents the brain from oxidative stress which is a free radical damage. Oxidative stress damages the cells and contributes to the Alzheimer's disease, cancer, Parkinson's disease as well as heart failure.

7. **Gum health**

Cavities and gum problems are the result of the food low in Vitamin C, A, D and K. The intake of foods rich in fat soluble vitamins helps to prevent the gum disease and tooth decay. It also plays a vital role in the mineralization of teeth and bones. The food rich in minerals and vitamins helps to eliminate the bacteria present in the mouth and teeth. Vitamin K works with other vitamins and minerals to eradicate the bacteria that damage the enamel of tooth. It also maintains the strong teeth by providing adequate amount of minerals.

8. **Reduce inflammation**

Vitamin possesses antioxidant properties which eradicated free radicals from the body that damages the cells and tissues. Vitamin A reduces the chances of food allergies and prevents the harmful overreaction. It lowers the inflammation which helps to reduce the chances of neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease.

9. **Healthy skin and hair**

Vitamin A is essential for the regrowth of skin and to heal wounds. It assists the epithelial cells externally and internally. Vitamins help in the formation of glycoproteins which is the combination of protein and sugar and binds the cells together for the formation of soft tissues.

Vitamin A deficiency results in poor complexion. Vitamin A can promote the health of skin and also counteracts acne. It keeps the wrinkles and lines at bay with the production of more collagen which helps to maintain the skin young. It also provides the healthy hair.

Traditional Uses

- Sweet potato helps to reduce the chances of liver disease and stomach cancer.
- It lowers depression and helps to lose weight.
- The fresh leaf helps to treat neoplasia.
- The leaves are considered to possess an antioxidant, antimutagen, anti-cancer, anti-hypertension, anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory properties.
- It is used to provide relief from constipation.
- It helps to enhance the immunity power and prevents the disease and infections.
- The drink made from the leaves helps to eradicate diarrhea, nausea and stomachaches.
- It is also effective for colds, flus, burns, bug bites and scrapes.
- It also lowers anxiety, stress and blood pressure.

How to eat

- The leaves of Sweet potato are consumed as leafy greens.
- They can also be steamed, fried or boiled.
- Chop the leaves of sweet potato and add it to the recipes or sautee with garlic and butter.
- Sauté leaves with sesame oil and ginger. And then season with pepper and salt.
- It is a best substitute for the spinach.
- In Asia, the leaves are stir fried with soy sauce and garlic.
- It could be consumed raw by adding it to the salads.

References:

http://2beingfit.com/sweet-potato-leaves-benefits-nutrition-recipes/

https://draxe.com/vitamin-k-deficiency/

https://draxe.com/vitamin-a/

https://paulhaider.wordpress.com/2012/05/09/health-benefits-of-sweet-potato-leaves/

Nutritional value of Sweet potato leaves, raw

Serving Size: 1 Cup chopped, 35 g

Calories 15 Kcal. **Calories from Fat** 1.62 Kcal.

Proximity	Amount	% DV
Water	30.38 g	N/D
Energy	15 Kcal	N/D
Energy	61 kJ	N/D
Protein	0.87 g	1.74%
Total Fat (lipid)	0.18 g	0.51%

Ash	0.48 g	N/D
Carbohydrate	3.09 g	2.38%
Total dietary Fiber	1.9 g	5.00%

Minerals	**Amount**	**% DV**
Calcium, Ca	27 mg	2.70%
Iron, Fe	0.34 mg	4.25%
Magnesium, Mg	24 mg	5.71%
Phosphorus, P	28 mg	4.00%
Potassium, K	178 mg	3.79%
Sodium, Na	2 mg	0.13%
Selenium, Se	0.3 µg	0.55%

Vitamins	**Amount**	**% DV**
Water soluble Vitamins		
Vitamin B1 (Thiamin)	0.055 mg	4.58%
Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)	0.121 mg	9.31%
Vitamin B3 (Niacin)	0.395 mg	2.47%
Vitamin B5 (Pantothenic acid)	0.079 mg	1.58%
Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine)	0.066 mg	5.08%
Vitamin C (Ascorbic acid)	3.8 mg	4.22%
Fat soluble Vitamins		
Vitamin A, RAE	66 µg	9.43%
Vitamin A, IU	1322 IU	N/D
Beta Carotene	776 µg	N/D
Alpha Carotene	15 µg	N/D
Beta Cryptoxanthin	20 µg	N/D
Lutein + zeaxanthin	5152 µg	N/D
Vitamin K (phylloquinone)	105.8 µg	88.17%

Lipids	**Amount**	**% DV**
Fatty acids, total saturated	0.039 g	N/D
Palmitic acid 16:00 (Hexadecanoic acid)	0.035 g	N/D
Stearic acid 18:00 (Octadecanoic acid)	0.004 g	N/D
Fatty acids, total monounsaturated	0.007 g	N/D
Oleic acid 18:1 (octadecenoic acid)	0.007 g	N/D
Fatty acids, total polyunsaturated	0.08 g	N/D
Linoleic acid 18:2 (octadecadienoic acid)	0.067 g	N/D
Linolenic acid 18:3 (Octadecatrienoic acid)	0.013 g	N/D

Amino acids	**Amount**	**% DV**
Tryptophan	0.012 g	2.73%
Lysine	0.08 g	2.39%
Methionine	0.03 g	N/D
Cystine	0.016 g	N/D

Flavonols	Amount	% DV
Isorhamnetin	0 mg	N/D
Kaempferol	0.7 mg	N/D
Myricetin	1.5 mg	N/D
Quercetin	5.9 mg	N/D

*Above mentioned Percent Daily Values (%DVs) are based on 2,000 calorie diet intake. Daily values (DVs) may be different depending upon your daily calorie needs. Mentioned values are recommended by a U.S. Department of Agriculture. They are not healthbenefitstimes.com recommendations. Calculations are based on average age of 19 to 50 years and weighs 194 lbs.

Check out two more tasty ways to use sweet potato greens:

Sautéed Sweet Potato Greens
1 lg bunch sweet potato greens (about ½ pound)
½ sm white onion, diced
2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper
1½ Tbsp maple syrup
1. REMOVE sweet potato leaves from stems and set aside. Remove smaller stems from the larger, tougher stems. Discard the larger stems and roughly chop the smaller stems.
2. HEAT olive oil in medium-sized pan over medium high heat. Add onion and sauté until just softened, about 3 minutes.
3. ADD stem pieces and sauté until tender, about 5 minutes.
4. ADD leaves, salt and pepper to taste, and maple syrup. Sauté until leaves are wilted, about 2 minutes. Serve. *Recipe courtesy of from The Bitten Word.*

Sweet Potato Greens with Grilled Salmon
1 lg bunch of sweet potato greens
1 tsp canola oil
½ tsp minced fresh ginger
1 tsp sesame oil
lemon zest
2 (4 oz) salmon fillets
Salt and pepper
1. REMOVE sweet potato leaves from stems. Chop smaller stems, and discard the larger ones.
2. HEAT oil in a skillet over medium high heat.
3. ADD leaves and stem pieces, sesame oil, and ginger. Sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, and grate some fresh lemon zest on top.
4. SEASON salmon with salt and pepper, and simply roast or grill. Serves 2.

Recipe courtesy of MJ and Hungry Man.

Tubers are ready for harvest in 4 months from planting in tropical areas and 6 months in cooler zones

• To harvest, pull back vines to reveal their base and then use a garden fork to loosen the surrounding soil and expose the tubers. There can be several tubers ready at each planting spot

• In warm areas, plants can be left in the ground for several years. Best to dig as needed. Look for a thickened stem, or walk around feeling for a lump, and start digging.

• In cooler areas, harvest crop before winter .Dig in autumn when the soil is still warm. Cure in a warm, airy place for two weeks before storing at cool room temperatures. Large tubers store best. Wash and air-dry for a few days and store in the fridge

Tubers are often found 12 inches or more from the plant's primary crown, so dig carefully.

Haven't grown Yacon before but guess it would be similar... Green Harvest Seed Co QLD says this ...

HARVEST

The plant takes 6 - 7 months to reach maturity. After flowering top growth withers and dies back and the tubers are harvested. They resemble dahlia or sweet potato tubers, on average weigh about 300 g but can weigh up to 2 kg. Once the soil starts to heave at the base of the plant, dig around to 'bandicoot' a few early tubers to extend the harvest season. The tubers continue to sweeten as the plant dies back so the main harvest should only take place once all the top growth is dead, usually by May. Don't leave it too long though, especially in areas that have mild winters, as the plant will start to shoot again as the weather warms up and the days get longer. The plant needs to be dug carefully to avoid damage to the crisp tubers. After separation from the central stem undamaged tubers can be stored in a cool, dark and dry place with good air circulation for some months. The average sugar content of the tubers increases during storage because of starch conversion. They can also be exposed to the sun for up to 2 weeks to accelerate the sweetening process.